

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ANKARA 05897 161354Z
ACTION SY-05

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SUBJECT: VIOLENCE IN VICINITY OF ANKARA AIR STATION: STRAFING
OF COFFEEHOUSES NEAR USAF BASE - ANKARA

ON EVENING OF 10 AUGUST, US ATTACHES HOSTED ANNUAL SWIM PARTY FOR FOREIGN ATTACHES, HOST NATION ATTACHE LIAISON OFFICERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES AT THE ANKARA AIR STATION POOL. AT APPROXIMATELY 2125, RO HEARD SUSTAINED BURST (12-15 ROUNDS) OF AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE. SOUND WAS PARTIALLY MASKED BY NOISE OF PARTY, MUCIC, ETC. APPROX 10 MINUTES LATER, RO HEARD ANOTHER LONG BURST, MUCH LOUDER AND MORE DISTINCT THAN THE FIRST. GUESTS, WHO WERE BEGINNING TO LEAVE, APPEARED NOT TO HAVE HEARD THE FIRING. ONE US DEPENDENT, HOWEVER, WHO HAD LEFT THE IMMEDIATE AREA OF THE POOL, CLAIMED TO HAVE HEARD THE FIRING AND SEEN WHAT APPEARED TO BE TRACERS.

TURKISH PRESS OF 11 AUGUST REPORTED THAT FOUR COFFEE-HOUSES IN THE BALGAT DISTRICT OF ANKARA WERE RAKED WITH AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE RESULTING IN FOUR DEATHS AND ELEVEN WOUNDED. (COMMENT: BALGAT, MORE A VILLAGE THAN A DISTRICT OF THE BUILT-UP PART OF ANKARA, ADJOINS THE USAF ANKARA AIR STATION, SITE OF HQ, TUSLOG AND MOST AMERICAN FACILITIES (COMMISSARY, MOVIE THEATRE, DEPENDENTS' SCHOOLS, ETC.) PRESS ACCOUNTS PUT THE TIME OF THE SHOOTINGS AT APPROX 2130
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PAGE 02 ANKARA 05897 161354Z

AND CLAIM THAT THE COFFEE HOUSES WERE FREQUENTED BY LEFTISTS AND THAT THE ATTACKS WERE THE WORK OF "RIGHTIST" OR "FASCISTS."

THESE ACCOUNTS CAME ONLY TWO DAYS AFTER PRESS COVERAGE OF OTHER, HIGHLY VISSIBLE LEFT-RIGHT CLASHES IN ANKARA. IN ONE INCIDENT, A MUNICIPAL BUS LEFT CENTRAL ANKARA AND WAS SPRAYED WITH AUTOMATIC WEASPONS FIRE ON THE CITY'S OUTSKIRTS ON 8 AUGUST. THIS SHOOTING, IN WHICH TWO WERE KILLED, WAS

DESCRIBED AS THE WORK OF RIGHTISTS. THE FOLLOWING DAY, A LEADER OF A RIGHT-WING NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY YOUTH CHAPTER WAS GUNNED DOWN IN BROAD DAYLIGHT IN ULUS, A BUSY SECTION OF CENTRAL ANKARA.

ORIGINATOR'S COMMENTS: NO DEFINITE CONNECTION AMONG THE THREE INCIDENTS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EPISODES LIES IN THE FACT THAT THEY OCCURRED IN BUSY SECTIONS OF THE CAPITAL AND, IN TWO CASES, IN OR NEAR AREAS FREQUENTED BY AMERICANS. (ULUS IS AN AREA IN WHICH MANY AMERICANS GO SHOPPING AND SIGHTSEEING.) IN THE THIRD CASE, PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION WAS SUBJECTED TO A LETHAL AND SENSELESS ATTACK. WHILE THE LEVEL OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN TURKEY--AND IN ANKARA--DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE INCREASED APPRECIABLY IN RECENT WEEKS, THESE LAST THREE OUTBREAKS HIGHLIGHT THE POSSIBILITY OF AMERICANS BECOMING ACCIDENTALLY INVOLVED IN A VIOLENT DISPUTE BETWEEN OPPOSING EXTREMIST FACTIONS.
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